

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-31 remain in the application for further prosecution. Claim 13 has been amended.

§ 112 Rejection

Claim 13 was objected to because the term "game" was repeated in line 9. The claim has been amended to delete the second use of the term "game." The Applicants appreciate the careful review of the claims by the Examiner.

§ 102 Rejection

Independent claims 1, 13, and 30 are all directed to methods for changing an appearance of a mechanical device displayed on a gaming machine. Independent claim 1 includes the limitation of "in response to detecting the indication, changing an appearance of the mechanical device." Independent claim 13 includes the limitations of "in response to detecting the first indication, changing a color of the plurality of mechanical spinning reels," and "in response to detecting the second indication, restoring the color to the plurality of spinning reels." Independent claim 30 requires "in response to detecting the indication, changing an appearance of the mechanical device." Independent claim 20 is directed to a gaming machine including "a displayed mechanical device" and a "controller...programmed to...in response to detecting the first indication, illuminate the illumination source to change an appearance of the displayed mechanical device."

As illustrated by the above claim limitations, all of the claims require a mechanical device and changing the appearance of the mechanical device. U.S. Pat. No. 6,454,649 to Mattice et al. ("Mattice") does not disclose such a limitation. Mattice is directed to a gaming

terminal having a programmable display switch. The programmable display switch is configured to be able to provide different labels. Mattice, Abstract. By using a single switch with different labels, the gaming terminal can provide a variety of different game functions, themes or types while not increasing the number of switches required. Mattice, col. 3, ll. 38-44. Mattice disclose using these switches in combination with a CRT or other computer-monitor type display. Mattice, col. 4, ll. 38-46. See also FIGs. 10a-11c, which all label the display as a "VIDEO SCREEN."

The video screen in Mattice is vastly different from the mechanical device that is recited in the independent claims of the present invention. See the present application, FIGs. 2-4, p. 11, ll. 8-10 ("The exemplary reel display area 50 includes one pay line 51 superimposed across three mechanical spinning reels..."), and p. 12, ll. 15-18 ("a side view of an exemplary mechanical spinning mechanical reel 62..."). Changing the appearance of a video screen is well-known. However, there is nothing in Mattice that discloses utilizing a mechanical device and changing the appearance of the mechanical device.

Furthermore, some of the dependent claims highlight this distinction between a video display and a mechanical device. For example, claim 7 recites "overlaying a video image upon the mechanical device." Claims 8-10 particularly states that the mechanical device comprises a plurality of mechanical spinning reels, mechanical dice, or a wheel, respectively. None of these features are disclosed in Mattice.

For at least this reason, claims 1, 13, 20, and 30 and their dependent claims are believed to be allowable over Mattice.

Conclusion

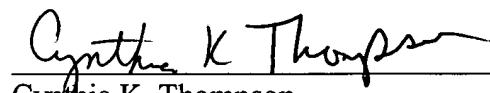
It is the Applicants' belief that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance and action towards that effect is respectfully requested.

If there are any matters which may be resolved or clarified through a telephone interview,

- the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the number indicated.

Respectfully submitted,

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